Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (*original*) A method for the diagnosis, early detection, risk estimation and monitoring of the course of diseases, wherein the content of apolipoprotein C-I and/or of derivatives thereof is determined in a serum of plasma sample from a human patient and the presence of a disease is concluded on the basis of a result of the determination which differs significantly from the value range determined for normal healthy persons.

2. (*original*) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein that fraction of the total apolipoprotein C-I present in a sample which has the ability to bind to hydrophobic molecular structures ("free apolipoprotein C-I"), is determined.

3. (*original*) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein that fraction of the total apolipoprotein C-I present in a sample which is detectable by direct determination in the sample using an immunoassay of the sandwich type ("apolipoprotein C-I") is determined.

4. (***currently amended***) The method ~~as claimed in any~~ of claims 1~~-3~~, wherein ~~it~~said method is carried out for the diagnosis, early detection, risk estimation and monitoring of the course of diseases which are selected from the group consisting of cancer diseases, sepsis, acute cardiac diseases, diabetes, Graves' disease and Crohn's disease.

5. (***currently amended***) The method ~~as claimed in any~~ of claims 1~~-4~~, wherein ~~it~~said method is carried out for the diagnosis, early detection, risk estimation and monitoring of the course of sepsis and correlates a proportion of apolipoprotein C-I which is significantly reduced compared with normal healthy persons and binds to hydrophobic molecular structures ("free apolipoprotein C-I"), and/or a reduced apolipoprotein C-I immunoreactivity in a serum or plasma sample of the patient with a septic condition.

6. (***currently amended***) The method ~~as claimed in any~~ of claims 1 ~~to~~ 4, wherein ~~it~~said method is carried out for the diagnosis, early detection, risk estimation and monitoring of the cause of a cancer disease and correlates a proportion of apolipoprotein C-I which is significantly reduced compared with normal healthy persons and binds to hydrophobic molecular structures ("free apolipoprotein C-I") and an increased apolipoprotein C-I immunoreactivity in a serum or plasma sample of the patient with a cancer disease.

7. (***original***) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein, when an increased lipoprotein C-I immunoreactivity is found in a serum or plasma sample of a patient the measured value is checked by an additional control determination in which a check is carried out to determine whether the vaue for the determinable immunoreactivity in the sample is significantly changed by treatment of the sample with an adsorbent with hydrophobic surfaces, and wherein the presence of a cancer disease is concluded with high probability when the value does not deviate or does not deviate significantly from the original measured value.

8. (***currently amended***) The method ~~as claimed in any~~ of claims 1 ~~7~~, wherein apolipoprotein C-I which binds to hydrophobic molecular structures ("free apolipoprotein C-I") is determined by subjecting a serum or plasma sample to hydrophobicinteraction chromatography, in which apolipoprotein C-I is bound to the chromatography material, and then determining apolipoprotein C-I in the eluted protein fraction.

9. (***original***) The method as claimed in claim 8, wherein octylsepharose is used as chromatography material, unbound constituents of the sample are removed by washing the chromatography material, the bound proteins are eluted with a dilute acid, in particular acetic acid, and the amount of apolipoprotein C-I in the eluate is then determined by means of HPLC and/or immunodiagnostically.

10. (***cancelled***)